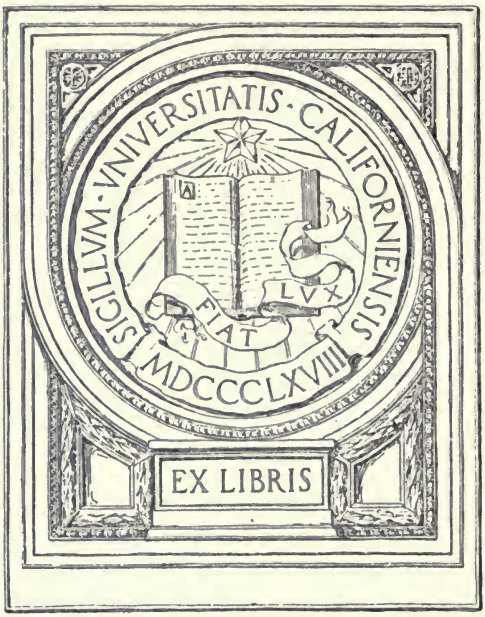

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TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

CORPORATE SOCIETY

OF

California Pioneers.

ORATION:

BY HON. LANSING B. MIZNER,

POEM:

BY THOS. G. SPEAR, ESQ.

Members of the Society.

SAN FRANCISCO:
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY.
1870.

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TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Society of California Pioneers,

SEPTEMBER 9th, 1870.

In pursuance of the provisions of its Constitution, the Society of California Pioneers, on the 9th of September, celebrated the Twentieth Anniversary of its organization, and of the admission of California into the Union, in the following manner:

At 9 o'clock, A. M., the members, with their families, friends and invited guests, numbering in all about fifteen hundred, embarked on board the Steamer Capital, E. A. Poole, Captain, to make an excursion to Mare Island. Among the guests were Gen. Wm. T. Sherman, Maj. Gen. Schofield, Admiral Farquhar, of the English squadron, and their several staffs, other officers of the United States Army and Navy, Federal officers, State officers, Military and Civil, Foreign Consuls, etc. Passing Alcatraz, a general salute was fired. Arrived at Vallejo, delegations from that place, from Sacramento, Napa and Sonoma, to the number of several hundred, joined the party. At the Island, the excursionists were received by Commodore Goldsborough and other officers of the Navy, there stationed. Having formed in line, they proceeded to the Hall prepared for the

occasion, where, having been called to order by President Carter, the following exercises were held:

Prayer by Rev. J. A. Benton, Chaplain of the Society.
Oration by Hon. L. B. Mizner.
Poem by Thos. G. Spear, Esq.
Benediction by Rev. A. Williams.

After this, Hon. J. B. Frisbie, in appropriate terms, presented to Gen. Sherman the Badge of the Society, and the General responded in a felicitous manner. During the literary exercises, a delegation of three hundred Stockton Pioneers arrived. The exercises being concluded, those who pleased engaged in the dance until 4½ o'clock, P. M., when the signal for departure was sounded, salutes were fired from the batteries, the country delegations were landed at Vallejo, and at 7½ o'clock, P. M., the excursionists reached the city without aught having occurred to mar the festivities of the day.

ORATION.

Mr. President, Fellow Pioneers, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Reticent indeed would be the individual who could not, under the circumstances that now surround us, utter some word of congratulation to the "California Pioneers," and to assure them that the results of their early trials and privations—their wanderings far from home, wives, children and friends—are appreciated by all who now enjoy the blessings of this great commonwealth on the Pacific.

Again have we assembled, as is our annual custom, to commemorate the origin of our Society, and to celebrate the advent of our State into the National Union. A century has not yet passed since our forefathers pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor, to the defence and maintenance of that liberty and independence which we, as their descendants, and citizens of that Union, now enjoy. But twenty years—two decades—a simple score of years, have passed away, since you, and I, and all of us, fellow Pioneers, welcomed the news that California—the Golden State—she who dallied and lingered last with the setting sun, had become a member of our glorious Union, thereby adding another star to that banner which is the emblem of free government and individual liberty throughout the world. It seems but yesterday to many of us, of this vicinity, that the steamer bearing the news of our admission into the family circle of States passed through our Carquinez Straits, and by her booming cannon, which echoed

along our valleys, conveyed the intelligence to the people, and made it inappropriate to speak of the balance of our common country as "*The States*," for we were then one of them. What memories of the past crowd upon us, as from this gay and brilliant assemblage—from this brink and shore of time—we look back to the day of our arrival upon the Pacific ; with what hopes, what ambitions, what aspirations came we ladened ? One perchance embodied the last lingering hope of a dear, sainted, widowed mother, upon whom the hand of adversity had laid too heavily ; whose little all, even her health, had been spent in toil and care for her darling boy, pressing him to her heart, and pointing Westward, bid him hie to California, where he might carve out for him and her, if not a fortune, at least a competency. None but a parent can know with what feelings of anguish that mother saw the form of her only born fade from her sight ; how in her new desolation she poured upon his wandering way her earnest prayer ; how for long weary days, weeks, months and even years, she waited for tidings of the absent one, scanned the newspapers for some clew of his whereabouts, shuddered at the recital of accidents by land and sea ; how in her nightly dreams, the horrors of Indian massacres and terrible shipwrecks oppressed her brain, until suspense ten-fold worse than reality was fast driving her to despair ; when some friend or acquaintance writes her from the land of gold, that on a certain day, in a certain gulch or mining camp, her son had sickened and died. Oh! could all the aggregated wealth of Christendom console that poor woman—crushed, broken-hearted, weighed down to earth :—but that small still voice which ever attends the good, whispers to her, there is a brighter land hereafter ; thus consoled and sustained, she stands erect and lives in the faith that earthly partings are but temporary. Another in the fullness of early manhood, leaves wife and children behind, comes determined to succeed and return to the loved ones at home, with means sufficient to secure for them that position in society which family associations or laudable

ambition might seem to demand; earnest, bold, honest, he embarked in whatever appeared to offer the realization of his hopes; it made but little difference what—mining, or mule driving, banking or lawing, running a steam engine or a restaurant—it was all the same to him, so success was reasonably certain. It is scarcely necessary to say that a large majority of such, after the ups and downs usually incident to a new country, were crowned with the reward their patience and industry deserved, and either returned to their Eastern homes, after a few years, where they found the children a little older, the girls thinking of the new fashions, the boys bargaining for razors, and the wife (dear soul) who had for years been the head of the family, looking a shade less youthful, but more lovely in her womanly prime; or as was more frequently the case, feeling averse to losing any precious time in the great race for fortune, would send for their families, who in due course of time would, via New York, Orleans, Panama or Cape Horn, arrive in the harbor of San Francisco, there to be re-united, the family once more itself again. Debtors came, impressing their home creditors with hopes of future collections; it is a fact, however, praiseworthy or otherwise, that it was sometimes thought more conducive to the general prosperity of a new State to keep all our resources on this side, and crossing the bar outside the Golden Gate was often considered as barring the collection of old debts—a kind of "Statute of Limitations." No fault was ever found on this score however, for the reason that the great prosperity which followed the efforts of Californians amply repaid all demands. The sons of the wealthy and influential came, consoling themselves with the idea that whatever freaks the fickle Goddess Fortune might take, they would be safe; that remittances from "the old folks at home" would be sufficient for all their wants, thus failing to rely on their own individual exertions. The home supply after a brief time ceased; and these young men, too proud or too indolent to work, eked out a rather precarious existence for a few years, and finally in nine

cases out of ten, abandoned the race to those who had no other backing than their own strong arms and wills, thus teaching that it is far better to give our young men correct early training, inculcating habits of industry and economy, than to leave them untold wealth. The sharp-witted speculator came, he of Wall street, the land districts, the Exchange and the Bourse, who having had many a contest with the figurative Bulls and Bears of the stock market, desired to see these animals in their wild and pristine condition—they laid out embryo cities, frequently on other people's land; they embellished them on maps, with plazas, towers, domes and minarets; sold corner lots for fabulous prices, if the amounts indicated in the deeds were correct; grand schemes on paper were inaugurated, the funds to maintain which were to be forthcoming when they should "strike it rich in the lower tunnel," and actual bills for expenses were not paid for the reason that the "coin was not in the country." Mathematical instruments sufficiently minute have not yet been invented to measure the exact benefit this class ever was to the State; but as the Almighty never made or did anything in vain, it is but charitable to concede that they were also necessary to the grand aggregate of the most cosmopolitan country the world ever saw, the uttermost ends of the earth being represented among us. But by far the most important class which came by land and by sea, o'er mountain and plain, from the East and South, from the vine-lands of Germany and France, sunny Spain and Italy, from England and gallant old Ireland, from North and South America, was the young and hardy sons of toil—they who from their youth had been trained to occupation and labor, and taught to scorn the indolent and aimless life of him who expects to inherit a fortune; but thirsting for adventure and a fair opportunity to build up for themselves homes, names, reputations, they came in the year 1849 by tens of thousands, having been preceded by only a few hundreds. How well they have succeeded—what they and those who have followed them have accomplished—let one hundred thousand happy

homes, five hundred villages, several large cities and one great Metropolis answer; let our splendid steamers, our work-shops, manufactories, grain-fields, vineyards, nut, olive and orange groves, bear testimony, and let a healthy gold basis for money values throughout the world concur.

But above all, higher and greater than these physical achievements, can we point with just pride and exultation to our advancement in the scale of moral, intellectual and scientific prosperity. In support of these we might summon the allied world, and the procession of our witnesses stretch out to the crack of doom. There is no field of moral or Christian culture, no avenue to material, commercial or scientific greatness in which we as citizens or as a State, have not been conspicuous. The church beckons the erring and the faithful from every valley and hill-side in the land, and our missionaries bear the banner of the Cross to millions of of the heathen in India and the Isles of the sea; our free schools offer knowledge to all. Our products and manufactures have become the wonder of the world; our voice has been heard with admiration amid the Federal Judiciary, and in the National Capitol. Members of our Society have commanded with honor the Nation's ships and fleets in time of war, and led our conquering armies with the sword in one hand, and the olive branch in the other, "from Atlanta to the Sea."

It would be well for the lawgiver, in view of the rapid advancement of the Laboring Classes in all that tends to true honor and stability, to realize the fact that henceforth this, the greatest of Nations, is to be governed by the toiling millions, the hardy sons of the plough, the hammer and the pick. The laws of nature, the experience of buried centuries, all prove that the prosperity of Empires depends upon the frugal industry, honest labor and equal rights of the citizen, and he is a poor statesman who attempts to resist these immutable rules. Of such were the "California Pioneers." Composed of all classes and conditions of men, who were

willing and anxious to gain a livelihood by the sweat of their brow, three thousand miles of toil and weary travel, o'er sandy plain and desert, and snowy mountain tops, amid the dangers of famine and hostile savages, had no terrors for them—no power to stay their onward march. Eighteen thousand miles of ocean around Cape Horn, between decks, twice through the tropics, with unwholesome food, subject to disease and death, could not subdue their patience; and the fevers and malaria of Panama could not deter them from their El Dorado. It is idle to attribute any motive of selfishness to our Pioneers greater than that which attends the ordinary efforts of every individual in the land. We dared unknown dangers, ran risks against which a respectable insurance office would not have protected us for less than ninety per cent., while our criticising friends remained at home and profited by our absence, and the tens of millions of gold with which we enriched the world. We found here a wilderness, a land groaning under waste: it is now populous, smiles and looks glad; its valleys of alternate verdure and yellow harvest reflect back the glistening of eternal snow. We were the forerunners—the John the Baptists—of civilization and prosperity on the shores of this great ocean.

What an Empire is growing up from that advance guard of only twenty years ago? And all the result of our liberal institutions and voluntary efforts. Our great commercial emporium is itself a magnificent monument to the enterprise and industry of our people, a parallel for which history fails to furnish—and all accomplished in twenty years, under the incentive of the greatest good to the greatest number. No land of the Constantines is this; no Tyrant commands us to quit Rome and build a city on the Bosphorus, but every man is a Lord of the Soil and the arbiter of his own fortune. Twenty years, while they dim the eye, whiten the head and add many wrinkles to the brow and shadows to the heart of man, are but a span, a mere speck in the lifetime of a State. Thousands of generations shall go and come, and go again, and

Monte Diablo clothe himself in azure hue as he does now, and the surf break upon our ocean-worn strand as of yore: while the blessing of the free institutions now founded shall still endure. The imagination fails—we are lost in wonder and amazement—when we contemplate the destiny of our State ages hence, guaged by our past progress. Here, around the bay of San Francisco, breathing the purest air, should grow up a world-commanding race. No element of deterioration can ever enter, no degeneration induce a decline and fall; a climate invigorating, soil and mineral-producing lands rich beyond measure, but exacting labor sufficient to keep up for ever the energy and intellectual superiority of Californians, which will but be in accordance with the natural surroundings of our wonderful State. We have the loftiest mountains, the highest cliffs and waterfalls, the richest gold fields, the best wheat and fruit, the largest and tallest trees, the widest ocean, the prettiest women, and why not the best men?

Of the hosts which came prior to 1850, many are not here. Where are they? Their bones lie mouldering on every hill and in every valley from Siskiyou to San Diego; one by one they have perished. "Sunk in the dark and silent lake." 'T is a time for memory and for tears; within the deep, still chambers of the heart, a specter dim whose tones are like the wizard-voice of Time heard from the tomb of ages, points its cold and solemn finger to the beautiful and holy visions that have passed away and left no shadow of their loveliness on the dead waste of life. That Specter lifts the coffin-lid of Hope, and Joy, and Love, and bending mournfully above the pale, sweet forms that slumber there, scatters dead flowers o'er what has passed to nothingness. Time in its swift course has waved its scepter o'er the beautiful and they are not. Remorseless Time, fierce spirit of the glass and scythe! What power can stay him in his silent course or melt his iron heart to pity? On, still on he presses and forever: the proud bird—the condor of the Andes—that can soar through Heaven's unfathomable depths,

or brave the fury of the northern hurricane, and bathe his plumage in the thunder's home, furls his broad wings at night-fall, and sinks down to rest upon his mountain crag, but Time knows not the weight of sleep or weariness, and night's deep darkness has no chain to bind his rushing pinion," and to his relentless call, thousands of our comrades of twenty years ago have bowed and yielded, as we in our time shall soon bow and yield. Some by the hand of the savage, fighting fell, some overwhelmed by mountain snows, and driven to feed upon human flesh, which nourished not, found their sepulcher; others in lonely mining camps or by the wayside, neglected, without attendants or comforts, longing for the sweet care of mother, sister or wife: passed away, and no stone or mark indicates their last resting-place. Violence, dissipation and despair have claimed their victims; and in a few years "California Pioneers" will be as scarce as the survivors of the Revolution, and all they can hope for is, that their descendants may be instrumental in transmitting unimpaired to an endless posterity this great State and its free institutions. Then to our fellow Pioneers who have gone to the grave, we bid a generous, manly, long farewell; and if by an inscrutable Providence it be so ordained that your spirits hover around us now, give us your blessing, and inspire us with the virtue, patriotism and nerve to go on and complete the great work you have begun; and above all teach us charity to all men, that we may forgive as we expect to be forgiven; that all our differences, sectional, political, or otherwise may be settled upon the altar of our common Country; all our disputes be subject to the fiat of the courts and the ballot box, and "those who make the wars, be the only men to fight."

In the brief time allotted to such an address as this, it would be out of place, as well as unnecessary, for me to attempt anything like a detailed history of the discovery and settlement of California, that task having been so admirably performed by many of my predecessors, and more particularly by the late gifted Edmund Ran-

dolph—peace to his ashes—that a mere allusion to our early history will suffice. The Spaniards, the Mexicans, and the English, were pioneers here long before the recent discovery of gold. There is some evidence, also, that thousands of years ago—far back in the dim past—the Chinese discovered and visited this country, and that the aborigines whom the Europeans found here are the descendants of the moon-eyed races; and it is within the range of probabilities that my successor, who will perform this pleasing task one year hence, will read translations from well authenticated oriental history, detailing the particulars of Chinese occupation of this land long before the Christian era. But be that as it may, the first white man who saw California was Cabrillo, 328 years ago; he sighted and named Cape Mendocino. Sixteen years later Sir Francis Drake landed near Point Reyes, and reported to his Government: "That there is no part of earth here to be taken up, wherein there is not a reasonable quantity of gold and silver;" notwithstanding which, gold was not discovered at Sutter's Mill for 290 years latter. In 1602, Sebastian Vizcayno entered San Diego and Monterey, and in that year held the first Roman Catholic service, as Drake had twenty-five years before held the service of the Church of England near Point Reyes. Neither Monterey nor any of the country north thereof was again visited by the whites for 160 years. Up to the year 1769, Upper California seems to have been neglected and forgotten, and left to the undisputed possession of worthless Digger Indians, grizzly bears, and herds of elk and antelope. In that year arrived Father Junipero Serra, a Jesuit Priest, whom we look back to as the head and front of California Pioneers. From his efforts followed a system of Christianizing Missions, which built up homes for the faithful and native converts from San Diego to Sonoma; protected them with many presidios, and established San José and Los Angeles for their supply. From 1769 to 1835, the Church shared largely in the direction and control of the simple pastoral affairs of the country; notwithstand-

ing that in 1822 the sovereignty of the country had been transferred from old Spain to the Republic of Mexico, by the successful revolution of the latter. In 1846 California was taken possession of as a part of the territory of the United States. Soon after, gold was discovered, and hundreds of thousands of people came. A Territorial Government was established, followed by our admission into the Federal Union on the 9th day of September, 1850—twenty years ago to day. We are out of our teens, but still in our infancy.

An organization such as the "California Pioneers" cannot fail to exercise a beneficial influence in the land, composed of immigrants from every State in the Union, self-perpetuating in their sons, permitting no discussion on religious, political or sectional questions, other than in a spirit of mutual concession:—it is the very embodiment of Self Government; having for members all who yet survive of the framers of our State Constitution, they know what it is to found a State; they have seen it grow into power, and be a blessing to its citizens;—they help swell that great voice which echoes from continent to continent, "the people are mighty and will prevail." The handwriting on the wall, which startled the Assyrian on his throne, appears again in characters of blaze and blood athwart European skies, indicating this time that the day is past when hundreds of thousands of brave men must perish, and as many homes be made desolate, for the inconsiderable object of perpetuating individual dynasties. To our honored guests of the Army and Navy, the Executive of the State, Civil and Military Officers, ladies and gentlemen, we greet you one and all; thank you for your presence, and rejoice with you that peace and prosperity reigns throughout our land: and especially to our distinguished fellow Pioneer, who has traversed a continent to meet us; the head of our armies, General W. T. Sherman, we say All Hail!

That dream of the Pioneer, the Great Overland Railway from ocean to ocean, has now been completed for more than a year, and

the "California Pioneers" have been whirled in palace cars from Pacific to Atlantic, amid the cheers and acclaims of hosts of friends. What shall we say, what can we say, of that great work, in comparison with which all others of ancient and modern times seem to dwarf into insignificance? "Those Titanian fabrics of old, which point in Egypt's plains to times that have no other record," are but the aimless, worthless monuments of unrequited toil; Rome's boasted Appian Way was but a cow-path when contrasted with this great triumph of our people; and more wonderful than all, is the fact that a people could plan such a work at a time when their country was contending on the battle field for National existence, requiring armies greater than the Persian ever led, and the expenditure of treasure that would have bankrupted all the Empires of ancient times.

Our onward march to power—the position of our world-renowned Bay, with all its commercial advantages, with its growing towns, and its great emporium, San Francisco, sitting secure in her regal and undisputed splendor at the gateway of a world's traffic—seem to have confused and dumfounded not only the people, but politicians and statesmen, who stand in wonder at the promised revolutionizing of the commerce of the Earth that is sure to follow a wise and progressive policy. With all due deference to the general intelligence of our Eastern countrymen, and of our law-makers in the Halls of Congress, we may be permitted to say that they fail to comprehend the greatness of the land in which they live. Accustomed to bound their Country on the west by the Alleghanys, or at best by the Mississippi Valley, they are utterly bewildered at the splash of our ponderous Oriental steamers nearing our coast, and the thunder of our railroad trains as they dash eastward o'er mountain and plain, laden with the wealth of the Indies, far in advance of all competing routes, literally forcing them to look to the West for all that heretofore came to them from the East. They are fairly startled with the conviction that the great highway of

Nations, from Canton to London, is across the Pacific ocean and our own continent, and that the Golden Gate is the toll-gate where the Nations must stop, and walk up to the Captain's Office and settle. With the experience of ages before him, upon the rise and fall of Empires, it is criminal for the Statesman as well as the General to make a mistake; he should use to the greatest advantage the means and opportunities which God in his infinite wisdom has placed at his control. If the trade and commerce of 400,000,000 of people directly in front of us can be had for the asking, he is an enemy to his country who would decline it, or throw any obstacle in the way of securing it. Never let it be said that free and enlightened America has driven from her shores that commerce which has enriched every nation that has ever controlled or even shared it. Shall we adopt that exclusiveness of which we have complained for ages, and which we have just been the means of breaking down? A single article manufactured by our own labor, by our own mechanics and with our own machinery, from our own wood, wool, cotton, metals, cereals and other products, if generally introduced to the favor of the numerous Mongolian family, would be of infinitely more benefit to our country than all the gold mines ever discovered. Every man and woman throughout our State could then find employment at wages commensurate with their wants, and the cry of "dull times" be heard no more in the land. We should tower high and far above the local interests of to-day, disregard the incendiary appeals of the demagogue made for personal and partisan purposes, and grasp the great future; secure for ourselves and our posterity—in addition to our other elements of prosperity—a maritime supremacy, which by reason of our commanding position and boundless resources, shall endure until the great pendulum of Time, ceasing to vibrate, shall settle to its center.

Without intending to be invidious, or in the least to disparage others, here in the shadow of that vigorous, prosperous young city

which is to convoy his name down to posterity, I cannot permit the occasion to pass, without assuring Don Mariano Guadelupe Vallejo, that the "Pioneers" honor and respect him; honor him as a true and upright adopted citizen of the United States—respect him, in that he was brave and faithful to his former Government. In him we recognize a noble type of the generous, hospitable Native Californian, whose door before the days of hotels and country inns was ever open, and gave us food and shelter without money and without price; a type of that race among us that is fast passing away. No! not passing away, but mingling its blood with the Anglo Saxon hordes, contributing an element of Latin fire and dash to Scandinavian descendants, which is, and is to be, the perfection of the human family. Thanks to the blending influence of time, association and common interest, the Native Californian can no longer utter the melancholy soliloquy of him who was summoned to answer in one of our courts: "*Yo soy un extranjero en el pais de me natividad, y no intiendo la lengua que ablan.*" ("I am a stranger in my native land, and the language they speak I do not understand.") Ere I conclude, permit me to allude to another class of "Pioneers": I mean those of our great and good men who *thought* out this country long before many of us were born. Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Lewis and Clark, Breese, Semple, Douglas and Benton, pioneered this Pacific Coast with their *brains*, during the first forty-five years of the present century, in their public messages, speeches and reports, and in their private efforts they pictured in earnest and glowing words the advantages of this Coast to the National Union; they drew aside the curtain of the future and saw all that we are now realizing, and are to realize hereafter, and brought the weight of their great power and influence to secure its blessings to their country. But time will not permit us on this occasion to pass any extended eulogy upon them and others of the great army of Pioneers; they have built their own monument, laying its foundation deep in the hearts of the Ameri-

can people, and by their own great acts, they "have piled stone upon stone until the shaft pierces 'mid-heaven, and vaulting to its summit" they stand there the acknowledged champions of free government throughout Christendom, and e'en now methinks we can look down the dim avenue of Coming Ages, and hear posterity sounding in their ears the plaudits of generations yet unborn.

ADMISSION POEM.

Delivered before the Society of California Pioneers, September 9th, 1870.

The ground is new on which we tread to-day—
New to the Arts and Freedom's friendly sway—
New to the Commerce that has found its shore,
The Saxon race, their language and their lore—
New to the throngs Adventure here beguiled,
Whose labors smoothed the way and cleared the wild
For countless followers, adding, as they came,
Life's social charms to realms of golden fame—
New to the world, admiring, from afar,
As when in Heaven we greet some late-found star,
And grow familiar with the shining sight,
Full of pleased wonder and sublime delight,
Where flaming suns escort their planet trains,
In its bright path o'er the celestial plains.

When, since the pen on History's page began
To trace the life of States, the deeds of man—
To tell the birth of nations, and recall
Their glorious rise or their disastrous fall,
Was there a spot, in earth's most genial zone,
On which the sun's propitious beams had shone,
So long a waste of mountain, plain and sod,
By the dull brute and squalid savage trod,
With such fair vantage for all aims sublime,
As this bright land—this hope-inspiring clime?

And what was meant, and why the long delay
To give its soil to an enlightened sway?
Why, through the periods of the darkling past,
Was this clime-trophy left to be man's last?

What kept its treasures and enticing skies
From the grand role of human enterprise?
Did Heaven withhold the knowledge of the power
That slept unsought, for more auspicious hour?
Look at the rule of a spasmodic race,
Whose futile prowess Science can trace.
In vain the Indian the quicksilver scanned—
In vain the Trapper washed the golden sand.
The Priest, devoted to his cloistered task,
Would not to human toil the mines unmask.
But not in vain did Marshall's eyes behold,
At Sutter's Mill, the shining specks of gold.
He brought them forth, that all might quickly know
What treasures slept those silent hills below.
The tale was told from mountain to the sea,
And, bird-like, East, went winged among the free.
The world was stirred, and felt the mighty spell
Which, Heaven-directed, works out all things well.

The rocks relate, that geologic times
Have given the earth its features and its climes—
That complex powers, in Nature's giant plan,
Had worked out wonders ere the birth of man—
From crude to clear, from chaos to the Soul
That moves supremely through the boundless whole.
So with events, that, unsuspected, come
From out the vortex of Time's teeming womb.
They show the world's advances—that the rise
Of races with the soul's ideal lies—
And ever since rude man's imperial part,
While scanning Nature for proficient Art,
Was seen to be, to choose his place of toil
Where'er he loved the climate and the soil,
His westward march, in long diffusive line,
Has seemed intoned with Heaven's serene design—
Whether as nomads o'er the Persian plains,
To where Phœnicia's memory still remains—
Or with the Goths, who left their Northern home,
And ravaged Spain and sacked divided Rome—
Or as the sons of Israel, when the throng
Through drear and desert wastes were led along
From gloomy Egypt, called by voice divine,
To Canaan's promised land in Palestine;
Or, strangest still of all of Heaven's decrees,
That doomed the Mayflower to uncertain seas,
Filled with the Pilgrims, fired by faith sublime,
Fleeing from wrong to an untraversed clime.
But grand as strange was the resulting good

Born of their suffering, prayer and solitude.
They found a wilderness of rock and sand,
And, while they looked, a commonwealth was planned—
They met a savage, treacherous as the seas,
But, like the waves, their rage died by degrees—
They saw a continent, in which the seed
Of Thought they planted bears no poisonous weed;
And from soul-blossoms that around them grew,
They shared the fruits of Truth and Freedom too.
Limbs knit to work, minds trained in Virtue's school,
Made the best sovereigns for their country's rule.
They faced all foes that menaced Home and Land—
O'ercame all mischief evil councils planned,
And saw their numbers grow, their power increase,
And wrote their annals in the love of peace;
Till, far away, where Freedom was a word
Ne'er without Union in its utterance heard—
As temples reared their domes and wigwams fled,
New Border States the sweep of Empire spread;
And in the West, bathed by the setting sun,
Fair California shone with Oregon—
The wastes confessing man's progressive sway,
From Plymouth Rock to San Francisco's Bay.

Here was the flag the freeman loves unfurled
To front Cathay—still floating round the world—
Here, when Columbia's mountain march was stayed,
And the land shrank its bounds, the sea obeyed,
And Science tasked the aid of steam and sail,
Where'er the keel of commerce could prevail.

And this fair heritage, by Nature planned,
When first she traced the picturesque and grand,
And culled the tints from Beauty's glowing store,
To give her scenes the enchantments that allure,
With all its charms of sunny vales and streams,
And treasures hid, beyond Aladdin's dreams—
This realm of peace, this land of fruits and flowers,
And pleasures sent to cheer life's fleeting hours,
Is theirs who struggled o'er the stormy wave,
With souls all hopeful and with hearts all brave.
And when, at last, the haven sought was found
Within the Bay, by mountains circled round,
That echoed back the ship's saluting gun,
O'er sites for homes they loved to gaze upon—
Where from green hills sloped down the smiling plains,
Waiting for harvests of nutritious grains,
While inland seas received each mountain flood,

And Fancy saw an Empire in the bud,—
The voyager felt, with transport in each eye,
Here was the field man's noblest aims to try—
Here would the heart accept the guages given
To do Life's work, and leave the rest to Heaven.

And those who traversed deserts, worn and tired,
By California's name alone inspired—
Who dared the dangers of wild beasts of prey,
And savage hordes that hemmed each wanderer's way
O'er plains and mountains, where, to suffering's cry,
Came back no answer, none brought succor nigh—
Who, in their saddened marches, turned not back,
Though graves bestrewed the wastes along their track—
Though wreck and ruin marked the dreary way,
While acrid waters brought them new dismay—
With cattle wasting—teams o'ercome and mired—
And ashen plains grown white as beasts expired—
Where gorged the vulture his unnatural maw,
And gaunt wolf, hungry, snapped his rasping jaw—
There, onward as the tide of travel rolled,
Came Donner's fate—the saddest ever told—
There raged the conflict between hope and gloom,
A land of beauty or a desert tomb.

But when the plains were crossed—the mountains passed—
To where the snowed heights sent no freezing blast—
How soft the gales that fan their western sides,
Down which the wanderer with his wagon strides—
How mild the sunlight of the cloudless sky—
How rich the sward his team stands grazing by—
How graceful look the pines—the oaks how green—
With spreading parks and flowery lawns between—
How blythe the wild birds from the branches sing—
How fearless in their pride the gray deers spring—
What grateful odors the pleased senses greet—
What cooling springs gush sparkling at his feet—
What buoyant influence fills the exhilarant air—
What new life-strength the upland breezes bear.
Where a brown carpet all the land o'erlies,
What vales of beauty meet his wondering eyes—
What groves of mammoth redwood reach on high,
Their branching fingers twining in the sky—
With rivers sweeping on their silvery way,
And lakes embosomed where the tulés play—
And from the mountains, where his courage fell,
What rows of rounded foothills roll and swell,

To where the billows break and islands rest
Upon the bright Pacific's boundless breast.

The Pioneer has reached the Golden Land,
His country's western boundary and its strand.
He meets the sons of other lands and skies,
And onward rolls the car of Enterprise.
He rears his tent—dispels his thoughts of gloom—
Digs in the bar, and plans the mountain flume.
He hews the log to fitting depth to hold
The riffling dirt, and cradle out the gold.
Month follows month, and, as the years unroll,
He sees what Time writes on Life's lettered scroll;
He sees the village grace the lovely vale,
Where late the wolf awoke his midnight wail—
He sees the city rear its prospering head,
Where merchant-feet were late unknown to tread—
He sees the church with its invoking spire,
Where rash men scoffed the soul's religious fire—
He sees the school-house reared the youth to train,
Whence ne'er went graduate with a vacant brain—
He sees the Law assert its rightful sway
Where Crime had stalked and courted bloody fray.
He sees, on heights o'er which the venturous climb,
The moon-eyed sons of China's swarming clime,
With basket-hat and pole, along the road
Trudge to the mines with his Samsonian load—
A patient plodder with the toiling van,
In this new mingling of unresting man.
He sees the camp, near which his pile was found,
A wreck of cabins—a deserted ground—
The hillocks gone where trees and shurbbery grew,
With boulders, sand drift and alone in view—
The ravaged earth divested of its charms,
Where erst the Placers rallied eager swarms.
But, in their stead, as older camps decline,
He sees the quartz that tells th' exhaustless mine—
And other sounds along the mountains rise
Than long-toms rocking where the torrent flies;
And the white cottage, with home's well-housed fold,
Bring sweet content with humbler piles of gold.
He sees the pick and spade, in cumbrous pack,
No longer bristling at the miner's back.
Down the riven gulch, or by the river's side,
No white tents gleam—no busy toilers glide—
The waters roar in turbid eddies still—
The grizzly growls on the adjacent hill;
But checkered camp-life and its rugged throng

Are passing to romantic tale and song.
He sees the bold Prospector, far and wide,
Lift up the veils that Nature's treasures hide,
O'erleap the barriers that obstruct the way,
And hold the fields reclaimed from savage sway.
He sees the vineyard or the well-tilled farm,
Where reigned but dearth or weeds, without a charm.
He sees the Trades, the Arts and Knowledge spread,
Where Science ne'er before had reared its head—
The College, wisely planned, with generous dower,
Where Berkeley's muse names Learning's latest flower.
He sees the Lyceum and the Lecture call
Scholar and student to the desk and hall.
He sees the rail-car daily speed its load,
Where he with team lagged months upon the road;
And where the pony galloped with the mail,
He hears the swift-winged lightning tell its tale;
And ships in squadrons sailing to and fro,
Where only shallops skimmed some years ago.
He sees a people, strangers when they came,
Ruled in sweet concord by Love's social flame,
And a great State, with all the forms of power,
Born of good impulse in a thrilling hour—
First child of Freedom by Pacific's waters,
And fairest yet of all Columbia's daughters.
And looking East, while conning o'er his task,
He sees Rebellion's hideous form unmask,
And traitors plotting, in an evil time,
To turn the tide of Progress into Crime.
He sees his country's danger—hears the roar
Of battle loud along the Atlantic's shore;
But in the smoke, and o'er the fiery storm,
He sees a Grant, and Sherman's gallant form,
Leading the legions of the loyal brave
From mountain fastness to the Gulf's blue wave—
Till Treason crushed and Freedom's falchion sheathed,
By Victory's hands the warriors' brows are wreathed,
Her banners proffered to the arms of Peace,
Without star-darkening—without stripe decrease—
Pledged to the right, in Union's Federal fold,
That man may keep what Heaven would not withhold.

For twenty years these scenes have met his gaze,
With new emotions at each changing phase—
For twenty years these marvels have been wrought,
Outstripping fable—opening worlds of thought.
Nay, years that count, by yonder tell-tale sun,
In man's brief life, not less than twenty-one—

Years which have taught, that, swerve howe'er he will,
Man's special mission waits him to fulfill.
His choice in youth might be some useful Art,
In village scenes to play a noiseless part;
But Heaven's intent, disguised in Fortune's call,
Has lead his feet to scale some mountain wall—
But, where he dreamed the gold in heaps to find,
Meeting but scanty ounces, unresigned,
He, for subsistence, plies his early trade,
And finds of such the Pioneers are made.
Though Wealth's allurements from the mines recede,
Life's social uses keep his days from need;
And years speed on, by Avarice uncontrolled,
Beneath a climate that has charms untold—
Where Nature scatters Plenty's copions stores,
And rosy Health dwells by congenial shores—
Years that have given the world its Golden Age,
And proffered means man's sufferings to assuage,
If for so grand an almoner could be,
Dispensers meet for poor humanity—
Years that have seen achievements that expand
The soul to heights that higher realms command;
And that have built, 'midst smiles and frowns of Time,
The path of nations to the Orient clime;
And made this varied mountain land a part
Of a great Empire's palpitating heart;
And gained, with scope for millions of the free,
Another shore to search another sea;
And brought, with changes under mountains mined,
New hopes, new homes, new blessings for mankind.

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